Boston, Massachusetts, Nov. 10. 1850.

My dear Mr. Estlin,

Last evening a letter from Mrs. Anna Thomas came to my hand enclosing a Bill of Lading, and acct. of Contents of Two Boxes for the Bazaar, shipped at Liverpool in 'Anglo American' for Boston; also, a letter to Mrs. May from Miss Estlin, which I hope to have the pleasure of bearing to the former tomorrow. Please make known to Mrs. Thomas my thanks for her note, and that it is my purpose to write to her as soon as the boxes come to hand.

I was very sorry to learn from Mrs. Thomas that, on account of your health, you had been obliged to leave Bristol, and were at Clevedon. She thinks that your European tour was too much for your strength, particularly when the business, which had accumulated for you during your absence, was added on your return. I fervently hope to hear of your improved health, soon.

By the Steamship which left NewYork on Wednesday last, I sent to Mr. Armistrong a copy of a correspondence I had been having with Rev^d. E. B. Hall, on his remarks at Bristol touching our Sunday antislavery meetings. I believe I have showed sufficient reasons - sufficient to a candid mind - why we have a civil & a Christian right to hold our meetings on all days, & why it is our moral and Christian duty to improve every day for advancing the Antislavery Cause. The letter is, of course, equally to yourself and all other friends around you, who feel an interest in our antislavery Cause. You will, also of course, be perfectly free in your criticisms upon my part of the correspondence; and I shall be glad to know your views about it.

And now I must tell you what I have been doing this last 2 or 3 days. When you know what unprincipled legislators we have in this country - I speak now of the National legislators - and what infamous laws they enact, you will not be much startled, I presume, to know that I have been violating the Law of the Land. You have seen, before this, accounts of a desperate attempt, by two fellows from Macon, Georgia, to seize William and Ellen Craft and take them back to Slavery in Georgia. The U.S. Judge resident here - Levi Woodbury -, on application from these men, (I hate to call them men) issued a warrant to the U.S. Marshal for their arrest, (of W. & Ellen Craft.) For about 6 days these men remained in the city, during which time the writ was in the Marshal's hands. No attempt was made to serve it! It was said that Judge Sprague (of the U.S. Court) instructed the Marshal that he had no right to force the outer door of a dwelling house, in order to execute the warrant; - this has been denied. However this was, it was generally known that Wm. Craft was effectually armed, with knife, revolving pistols, &c. &c. and would resist to the death any attempt to take him into Slavery a

The whole city was in great excitement. The more active part of the inhabitants to a great extent expressed the determination not to suffer Wm. or Ellen Craft to be taken from the city. The Vigilance Committee (appointed at a late meeting held in Faneuil Hall for the purpose of denouncing the new Fugitive Slave Law) enlarged their numbers, held an almost permanent session, and appointed various sub-committees to act in different ways. One of these committees called repeatedly upon Messrs. Hughes & Knight - the slave-catchers - and requested and advised them to leave the city. At first, they refused peremptorily to do so, and said they would never leave till they got hold of the d—d niggers. On the complaint of different persons, these two fellows were several times arrested, carried before one of our County Courts, ~~and held to bail~~ on the charge of conspiracy to kidnap, of defamation in calling William & Ellen Craft slaves, &c. &c. At each time they were held to bail in heavy sums. At length, they became so alarmed that they left the city by ~~a circuit~~ an indirect route, evading the vigilance of many persons who were on the look-out for them. - Hughes came very near losing his life, at one time, at the hands of an infuriated colored man.

While these men remained in the city, a prominent ~~This~~ gentleman sent word to William Craft that if he would peaceably submit to an arrest, he and his wife should be bought from their owner, cost what it would. Craft replied that he was, in a measure, the representative of every other fugitive in Boston, some 2 or 300; that if he gave up, they would all be at the mercy of the slave-catchers, & must fly from the city at once, at any sacrifice, and if his freedom could be bought for two cents, he would not consent to compromise the matter in that way. Having thus manfully stood to his ground, while the ~~def~~ danger impended over him (Ellen in the meantime had been taken to a retired place out of the city) - when the kidnappers had gone, the friend of himself & Ellen felt that they must not stay in Boston, nor in this country; for it appeared that the U. S. Government was determined to try its hand in enforcing the Fugitive Law, and we knew that Wm. & Ellen C. would be prominent objects of the Slaveholders' vengeance. On talking with Wm; we found that, more particularly on his wife's account, he had been thinking it best to leave the country. For myself, I had been advising their going to England, ever since the successful ~~arrest~~ seizure & delivering into slavery of James Hamlet in New York. It was, after consultation as to ways & means, & the expediency of the thing, determined that they should go to England, and seek there, under the British Monarchy, the home, the liberty, the chance to live and get a living, which in this Free Republic are denied to them. What a humiliating conclusion for Americans, whose fathers fought a seven years' war with Britain in order to be free, to be compelled to come to

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William and Ellen Craft are now on their way to England. We did not like to run the risk of putting them here on board the Steamship which leaves this port next Wednesday. Accordingly they took the Railroad, on Thursday last, to Portland (110 miles to the N.E. of us) in the State of Maine – out of the jurisdiction of the Marshal who held the warrant against them – designing to take Steamboat that same night for St. John's, New Brunswick, thence to Windsor, Nova Scotia, & thence (by stage) to Halifax – there to await the arrival of the British Steamship on Thursday next (via Boston) I proceed in her to Liverpool. Most unfortunately, on arriving at Portland, we found (for I accompanied them in this flight) that the Steamboat had been so much damaged, on her last trip, by a collision with another vessel, that she was hauled up for repairs, and would not sail that night, nor until Saturday morning at the earliest. I took them to a friend's house in Portland, where we were most hospitably welcomed & sheltered. – At their urgent request I remained in Portland until Sat. P.M. It then became a matter of reasonable certainty that the boat would sail in the evening – I saw the repairs completed, and the Boat afloat and getting ready, – and then I left them, in care of their friend at P., and returned to Boston, it being quite necessary I should do so, and nothing being left for them to do, but to go on board the boat when she was ready to depart. – However, I am sorry to say I left Ellen C. suffering very much from a severe headache, the consequence of her protracted alarm & anxiety; and I confess I feel somewhat concerned for her, that she may have become more ill, and been unable to proceed. But she did not think it would be so, and I hope the best. I expect to hear tomorrow. I trust God will grant them a safe deliverance from the hands of their pursuers, and will guide them to a peaceful home. I gave to Wm. a letter of introduction to yourself, knowing that whatever your health would allow you to do for them, you would most gladly do. They have also letters from George Thompson to friends in England. I think, on their arrival in England, they will make the best of their way to wherever Wm. W. Brown is; – On my return to Boston, I found at the United States Tavern Office, to which place I first turned my steps, the letter from Mr. Thomas, with the enclosure from your daughter for Mrs. May.

Leicester, Tuesday noon, Nov. 12th I have had much pleasure in the reading of the said Note, and was deeply interested in the results of Estlin's observations upon the characters &c. of our friends Mr. Chapman & her sisters. I wish, with her, that she could see Anne Weston. She is small in person, delicate in health, but with a most animated & animating countenance – a fine, clear, speaking eye – and in private social intercourse is one of the most agreeable persons I know. She has a great soul, and were her physical powers any way corresponding, would be a marked and very effective woman.

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I must leave it to my wife to notice Miss E.'s letter more fully, and proceed to one or two things which I must say before I close — and the time for doing that is at hand. George Thompson, you know, is now with us. I was very happy to become acquainted with him. I saw him once, & heard him speak briefly, in 1835. I have already become very much interested in him. On Friday evening next a Reception Meeting is to be held for him in Boston; after which, he proposes, a brief course of Lectures, in compliance with urgent request, on British India, &c. and will also, from time to time, during the winter, lecture on various topics, Slavery included, as he may be invited to do. He told us (as we were inquiring about Wm. W. Brown) of the ~~[illegible]~~ aid you had afforded him, in getting out his Panorama. B. has sent me a copy of the little descriptive pamphlet and I think it promises well for the Pictures. — ~~[illegible]~~ Every Abolitionist here feels that the Antislavery Cause owes a large debt to George Thompson, and had they wealth at their command, I am sure he would be a sharer of it. As it is, he will share what they have.

I am both sorry, & on his account mortified, that Wm. H. Channing's replies to your inquiries proved so vague & unsatisfactory. If you have not determined to do nothing more about it, and will once more state ~~it~~ to me the precise points on which you want satisfaction, I will see him & by conversation get something more distinct from him [illegible] possible.

I must say a few words about the recent Women's Rights Convention at Worcester — a subject in which you, perhaps, feel an interest no more lively than I have done, although I am, & have long been, well convinced that many of the existing social & civil relations ~~were~~ are established in a tyrannical spirit towards woman, and even where we may not suspect any sinister ~~attempt~~ motive, we see an oppressive result. I think little of Women having an opportunity to mingle with men in ~~the more~~ public affairs — but in all matters of business, occupation, and ways & means of getting a living reputably & sufficiently, I think they are much wronged. I do not however object to a Woman's being Governor of the State, or President of the Country, if she is qualified for it; and I do think that an infusion of honest women into our National Congress & Councils (I fear we couldn't get such there, any more than honest men, in any considerable numbers) would have saved us from the shame & baseness of the last Congress, and of our Government generally. The Convention at Worcester was one of the most interesting assemblies I ever attended. Women were the principal, though not ~~the~~ the only speakers, and showed themselves in no wise inferior, as good reasoners, acute expounders of Scripture, and eloquent speakers, to our best men.

I have just had a letter from Portland, saying that W. & E. Crafts sailed thence on Saturday evening, 10 o'clock. I trust therefore that they are now near to Halifax, and will be in England when the Canada arrives — the same ship that will take this. No more time. With sincere regards, in which my wife & ~~[illegible]~~ join, to Miss Estlin, and to yourself — I am, &c. Saml. May Jr.

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